

**Study and examination regulations  
for the Master's degree programme  
'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation (MABLE)'**

**27 April 2017**

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Note: This translation is provided for information purposes only. In the event of any discrepancy between the translation and the original German version published in the Official Bulletin (*Dienstblatt der Hochschulen des Saarlandes*), the provisions of the latter shall take precedence.

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Pursuant to Section 60 and Section 64 of the Saarland Higher Education Institutions Act of 30 November 2016 (Official Gazette of Saarland, p. 1080) and with the consent of the University Senate, the University Board and the highest competent state authority of Saarland with responsibility for science and research, the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences (HW) at Saarland University hereby issues the following study and examination regulations for the conversion Master's degree programme 'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation (MABLE)'.

**Content:**

**Preamble**

Section

- 1 Scope; Type of degree programme
- 2 Admission requirements
- 2a Academic aptitude test

**Part 1 – Study regulations**

- 3 Outline of the blended learning programme
- 4 Organization and structure of the blended learning Master's programme; Start of programme; Standard period of study; Scope
- 5 Academic credits and workload
- 6 Determining duration of study

**Part 2 – Examination regulations**

- 7 Examination objectives; Academic title
- 8 The Examination Board
- 9 Examiners
- 10 The final assessment phase
- 11 Transfer of earlier academic course and examination credits and previous periods of study
- 12 Academic assessment and grading/marking scale
- 13 Master's thesis
- 14 Notification of results; Inspection of records
- 15 Repeating academic assessments and examinations
- 16 Withdrawal from an examination; Failure to attend; Deception; Contravention of regulations
- 17 Examination certificate; Formal graduation certificate; Diploma Supplement; Record retention period
- 18 Academic misconduct
- 19 Inspection of records; Appeal procedure

**Part 3 – Final provision**

- 20 Commencement

## **Preamble**

The aim of the Master's programme is to teach students the academic knowledge, skills and competencies that are required in the field of evaluation and monitoring, enabling them to design, implement and manage evaluations.

The primary learning objective is for graduates to be able to apply evaluation theories and methodologies in a range of areas and in different functions (e.g. as evaluators or evaluation managers).

## **Section 1**

### **Scope; Type of degree programme**

(1) These regulations govern the admission requirements, content and structure of the predominantly applications-driven, conversion Master's degree programme 'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation (MABLE)' as well as the purpose, content and procedures of the final assessment phase including the requirements for registering for the final assessment phase based on the provisions of Sections 60, 61 and 64 of the Saarland Higher Education Institutions Act.

(2) The study regulations stipulate the curriculum structure to be provided in the Master's degree programme (sec. 4). These regulations also set out the requirements that students need to meet in order to graduate successfully from the programme.

(3) The module catalogue (see sec. 4) contains details of the scheduling, content and scope of the individual modules (courses) offered. It also specifies how many ECTS credits (CPs) can be obtained by successfully completing a particular course.

(4) The language of instruction is English.

## **Section 2**

### **Admission requirements**

(1) Applicants seeking admission to the Master's degree programme shall have a first university degree and relevant professional experience of typically not less than one year. They shall also be able to demonstrate knowledge of statistics and relevant methodological skills totalling 20 ECTS credits.

Furthermore, applicants shall provide proof of language proficiency in English (level B1 CEF).

(2) Students with a disability may receive academic accommodation if they are able to demonstrate, in a manner other than that typically used, that they have the relevant knowledge and skills. Non-standard applications will be decided individually by the Examination Board. The Examination Board can delegate this duty, either generally or in specific individual cases, to the Chair of the Examination Board.

(3) Admission may also be granted to applicants without a university degree if they have a higher education entrance qualification in accordance with the provisions of Section 77(2) of the Saarland Higher Education Institutions Act and at least five years of relevant professional experience and are able to demonstrate by taking an academic aptitude test that they have an adequate knowledge of statistics and relevant methodologies and their empirical use, an understanding of scientific and academic work practices and proficiency in English (level B1 CEF).

(4) The applicant's professional activities are considered to be relevant if they indicate that the applicant has a well-developed understanding of the objectives of this Master's programme within the meaning of the preamble set out above.

## **Section 2a** **Academic aptitude test**

(1) The academic aptitude test comprises the following two parts:  
a. an assessment of a portfolio to be submitted by the applicant and  
b. a 30-minute oral exam.

(2) Admission to the academic aptitude test is granted on the basis of an informal written application submitted by the applicant. The application shall be submitted to the Examination Board no later than 1 April. The application shall be accompanied by the portfolio. The portfolio must contain:

1. a personal statement documenting in detail the applicant's relevant professional development and accompanied by appropriate supporting documents (professional roles, duties and responsibilities; participation in continuing education and professional development courses; projects; professional references and testimonials)
2. CV (in tabular form)
3. school-leaving certificates and vocational training certificates
4. job references and/or documentary proof of all relevant practical experience
5. proof of any assessments or examination results issued as part of a continuing education or professional development course
6. a written reference from the German Chamber of Foreign Trade (*Deutsche Außenhandelskammer*) or from the appropriate Chamber of Industry and Commerce (*Industrie- und Handelskammer*) supporting the application.

(3) The candidate will not be admitted to the oral examination if

1. the documents detailed in sec. 2a(2) have not been submitted in their entirety or
2. the candidate's professional experience does not demonstrate sufficient overlap with the subject matter addressed in the Master's degree programme 'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation' or
3. the requirements set out in Section 2 have not been met.

The decision to admit a candidate to the oral exam is made by the Examination Board. The applicant will be informed of the decision in writing.

(4) The oral exam typically lasts 30 minutes per candidate. If necessary, the oral exam can be held remotely over a suitable video link. The oral exam shall be conducted by one of the coordinators of the Master's programme 'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation' in the presence of an observer who is familiar with the subject matter discussed. The examiner shall assess the oral examination and grade it as a 'pass' or a 'fail'.

(5) Applicants taking the oral exam should demonstrate that they meet the criteria set out in Section 2 above and that they have the requisite theoretical and methodological competence to pursue Master's level academic work. This will require them to demonstrate an understanding of statistics and relevant academic methodologies and show that they are acquainted with the formal rules that apply to scientific and academic work practices.

(6) A written record shall be kept of the progress and content of the exam and shall include:

1. the name of the examiner
2. the name of the competent observer
3. the time when the oral exam began and when it ended
4. the main topics addressed in the exam
5. the result of the oral exam.

The assessment will be made immediately after completion of the exam, but in the absence of the applicant. Once the assessment has been completed, the applicant shall be notified immediately of the result.

(7) If the academic aptitude test has been completed successfully, a certificate shall be issued and signed by the examiner.

## **Part 1 – Study regulations**

### **Section 3**

#### **Outline of the blended learning programme**

The curriculum content of the Master's degree programme will be taught via:

1. web-based instruction (online seminars) and
2. compulsory attendance at the on-campus courses held during the Master's programme. If a student is unable to attend an on-campus course, the student shall attend the following year.

### **Section 4**

#### **Organization and structure of the blended learning Master's programme; Start of programme; Standard period of study; Scope**

(1) The curriculum offered shall correspond to 60 ECTS credits and shall include at least the following modules (courses):

1. Module: Introduction to Evaluation (5 ECTS credits)
2. Module: Conducting and Managing Evaluation (5 ECTS credits)
3. Module: Evaluation Design (5 ECTS credits)
4. Module: Data Collection Methods in the Field of Evaluation (5 ECTS credits)
5. Module: Data Analysis Methods in the Field of Evaluation (5 ECTS credits)
6. Module: Economic Evaluation and M&E within Organizations (5 ECTS credits)
7. Module: Key Communication Qualifications in the Field of Evaluation (5 ECTS credits)
8. Elective (5 ECTS credits)
9. Case study spanning more than one semester (5 ECTS)
10. Master's thesis (15 ECTS credits)

(2) Academic assessment is usually in the form of assignments submitted online, an oral exam or an oral presentation and a written report or essay, or a written examination. Details are provided in the module catalogue.

In addition, students are required to attend at least two on-campus courses during the programme.

(3) The total workload for the Master's degree programme is at least 1500 hours. The amount of time spent studying and preparing for assessments is about 15 hours on average.

(4) Students can only join the programme in the winter semester.

(5) The module catalogue supplements the study and exam regulations and contains detailed information regarding the structure and content of the blended learning curriculum.

## **Section 5**

### **Academic credits and workload**

(1) Credits (often referred to in Germany as 'credit points' or 'CPs') are issued in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as recognition of a student's academic performance in coursework and examinations. The number of credits awarded reflects the time a student will typically spend on studying the teaching materials, attending a lecture, class or seminar, as well as on class preparatory and follow-up work and on coursework assessments and examinations. Credits are awarded for attaining the minimum required pass mark irrespective of the actual grade awarded.

(2) A student shall acquire at least 60 credits over the course of the degree programme; one credit (1 CP) corresponds to a student workload of 25 hours. Details are provided in the module catalogue.

(3) As a rule, coursework assessments shall be submitted and examinations taken by the end of the semester in which the course or module was held.

(4) The duration of an online written examination shall be at least 60 minutes and not more than 180 minutes. Oral (online) examinations shall last at least 15 minutes and no more than 60 minutes.

## **Section 6**

### **Determining duration of study**

When calculating whether a student has fulfilled the course time requirements for a particular course or module or has met the deadline to register for or take an examination, allowances shall be made for extensions and interruptions affecting the student's period of study, provided that they were due to

1. the student contributing to a committee within the university, *AStA* (the Students' Union Executive Committee) or the *Studentenwerk* (Saarland Student Services) if such committee is required under the statutes of the organization or by law
2. an illness, a disability or some other cause beyond the student's control
3. pregnancy, caring for a child or supporting family members with care needs; in this case, students shall at a minimum be permitted to take study leave in accordance with the provisions regarding working hours for expectant mothers as set out in Sections 3, 4, 6 and 8 of the Federal Maternity Protection Act (*Mutterschutzgesetz*) or the provisions regarding parental leave as set out in the Federal Parental Leave and Parental Benefits Act (*Bundeselternzeitgesetz*). Time allowances shall also be made for a recognized and relevant study abroad period of up to two semesters. Students wishing to claim a time allowance in accordance with items 1 or 2 in the above list are required to provide appropriate proof.

## **Part 2 – Examination regulations**

### **Section 7**

#### **Examination objectives; Academic title**

(1) The Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University provides the opportunity to take the final assessment in the conversion Master's degree programme 'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation'. This final assessment phase serves to determine whether a candidate possesses the skills required for academic work, has an understanding of the deeper principles and key research results in the field of evaluation, and – in view of the more applications-driven approach of the Master's programme – is able to plan, implement and analyse the results of an evaluation.

(2) The Department of Sociology in the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University reserves the right to appoint other suitable institutes to organize and conduct these final assessments. This might include delegating responsibility for exam invigilation or conducting oral examinations remotely via a suitable video link.

(3) The final assessment phase in the Master's programme covers coursework assessments and end-of-module examinations as well as the student's Master's thesis.

(4) Students successfully completing the final assessment will be awarded the degree of Master of Arts (M.A.).

## **Section 8 The Examination Board**

(1) The final assessment of students on the Master's programme is the responsibility of the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University. The faculty shall appoint an Examination Board.

(2) The Examination Board shall comprise:

1. three representatives from the group of professorial staff, of whom one shall be the head of the programme and one shall be the deputy head of the programme
2. the programme coordinator, who represents the group of mid-level teaching staff
3. a representative from the student body.

Each member of the Examination Board shall have a deputy who represents them in their absence. The members of the Examination Board defined in items 1 to 3 above and their deputies are elected for a term of up to two years by the respective faculty councils after being nominated by the relevant member groups within the faculty. Members may be re-elected at the end of their term. If a member or deputy member of the Board withdraws before the end of their term, a replacement shall be selected for the remainder of the term. Deputy members and replacement members may be re-elected at the end of their term.

(3) The Examination Board is responsible for monitoring compliance with the provisions of these examination regulations. Unless otherwise provided for in these regulations, the Examination Board can delegate this duty, either generally or in specific individual cases, to the Chair of the Examination Board.

(4) The Examination Board shall be quorate when its members have been duly notified and a majority of voting members are present either in person or via a remote digital link. The meetings of the Examination Board are not open to the public. The Examination Board shall make its decisions by a majority vote of members present; in the event of a tie, the Chair of the Examination Board shall have the casting vote. The members and deputy members are obliged to maintain confidentiality in accordance with Section 12(3) of the Saarland University Act and the provisions concerning the fundamental principles and rules governing Saarland University.

## **Section 9 Examiners**

(1) Examiners can be appointed from the group of professorial staff within the Department of Sociology in the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University, professorial staff from other universities, senior academics qualified to professorial level, professors on special contracts, honorary professors and academic research staff; in exceptional circumstances, part-time contract teaching staff at the Department of Sociology in the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University can be appointed as examiners in the subject area in which they teach.

(2) The examiners shall reach their decisions impartially and independently.

## **Section 10**

### **The final assessment phase**

(1) Applications for final assessment will be accepted from students who demonstrate that they have met all of the requirements for the main study phase of the Master's programme.

(2) The requirements for the main study phase are a four-semester period of study (see Section 4(3)) that includes attendance at the prescribed on-campus courses.

(3) Applications for registration for the final assessment phase shall be submitted in writing to the Examinations Office responsible for the Master's programme in Evaluation (hereafter: 'Examinations Office (Evaluation)').

(4) Applications for registration for the final assessment phase shall be accompanied by the following documents, unless they have already been submitted to the Examinations Office (Evaluation):

1. Proof of enrolment at Saarland University during the programme's main study phase and proof of payment of the study fees from Kaiserslautern University of Technology
2. Proof of academic credits earned from participating in online courses and modules during the programme
3. Proof of successful completion of all on-campus courses
4. Proof of successful completion of written and oral assessments and examinations during the main study phase of the Master's programme
5. A declaration whether and, if applicable, how often the candidate has failed an examination or relevant final academic assessment in the Master's degree programme or has failed an equivalent examination or final academic assessment in another academic programme at a university or equivalent higher education institution in Germany, and whether the candidate is currently participating in the examination process for an equivalent degree programme at another university or an equivalent higher education institution or whether their right of examination has been revoked.

(5) The decision to admit a candidate to the final assessment phase is made by the Examination Board. The Examination Board can delegate this decision to the Chair of the Examination Board for the programme 'Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation'. A candidate shall not be admitted to the final assessment phase

1. if the requirements set out in these regulations have not been met
2. if the candidate has lost their right of examination after failing an examination or relevant final academic assessment, including all permissible retake attempts, in the Master's degree programme, or after failing an equivalent examination or final academic assessment, including all permissible retake attempts, in another academic programme at a university or equivalent higher education institution in Germany.
3. if the candidate is currently participating in the examination process for an equivalent degree programme at another university or an equivalent higher education institution
4. until all fees and charges relating the Master's programme have been paid.

## **Section 11**

### **Transfer of earlier academic course and examination credits and previous periods of study**

(1) Decisions regarding the recognition of earlier academic course and examination credits, previous periods of study and Master's degree examinations at other universities shall be made by the Chair of the Examination Board.

(2) Academic credits earned at a university will generally be recognized, unless there are

significant differences with respect to the type of knowledge and skills acquired. The content and skills taught in the Master's programme are specified in the module catalogue. If previous academic credit is not transferable, the student shall be notified of the reasons. The university shall bear the burden of proof, i.e. the reasoning underlying the decision shall be explained to the student.

(3) When recognizing previous periods of study at foreign universities and the academic credits earned during those periods, the equivalency agreements approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK – *Kultusministerkonferenz*) and the Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany (HRK – *Hochschulrektorenkonferenz*) shall be taken into account, as shall any agreements existing between Saarland University and its partner universities.

(4) As part of the credit transfer procedure, students shall submit to the Examinations Office (Evaluation) documents or academic transcripts that state the number of credits earned, the grades or marks achieved and the dates of all examinations or coursework assessments in another degree programme or at another university. These transcripts shall have been issued by the university at which the academic credits were earned.

(5) Previous periods of study and earlier academic course and examination credits shall not be counted towards the Master's degree requirements if the previous period of academic study and the credits obtained therein were used to secure admission to the Master's programme in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.

(6) If a student demonstrates proof of having acquired an equivalent level of competency and skill in a non-university environment, they shall earn up to half of the corresponding academic credits allotted for such knowledge and skills in the Master's programme.

## **Section 12**

### **Academic assessment and grading/marketing scale**

(1) The final assessment in the Master's degree programme takes account of the results of the assessment of the Master's thesis and the results of the other required examinations and assessments. The overall final grade is calculated using the grades attained in these assessments and examinations weighted in accordance with the number of credits associated with the respective modules.

(2) A candidate shall be deemed to have passed the final assessment if the grade for the Master's thesis was at least 4.0 in the German marking scheme and the candidate acquired at least 60 ECTS credits.

(3) The following marking scale is used to grade coursework and examinations, such as written exams, oral exams, reports, essays and written assignments.

#### **Grading scale and information on grading system**

Individual pieces of coursework or examinations are graded using the 1-to-5 grading scale commonly used in German universities. The grading scale, which is compatible with the ECTS system, allows grades to be raised or lowered by 0.3 to facilitate additional differentiation (note: the grades 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 are excluded from the scale). The minimum pass mark for an assessment or examination is 'sufficient' (4.0 / E). The detailed grading scale is set out below:

1.0	excellent	A	An outstanding achievement
1.3	very good	B	Academic achievement that significantly exceeds average requirements
1.7 / 2.0 / 2.3	good	C	Academic achievement that exceeds average requirements
2.7 / 3.0 / 3.3	satisfactory	D	Academic achievement that meets average requirements
3.7 / 4.0	sufficient	E	Academic achievement that despite its shortcomings still meets the minimum requirements
5.0	fail	F	Failure to meet the minimum requirements due to significant shortcomings in student performance

The grade awarded for a particular module is the arithmetic mean of the component assessments within that module weighted in accordance with the number of ECTS credits associated with that module. Grades that are composed of two or more individual grades are rounded to the first decimal place and classified according to the following scale:

1.0–1.2	excellent	A
1.3–1.5	very good	B
1.6–2.5	good	C
2.6–3.5	satisfactory	D
3.6–4.0	sufficient	E
4.1–5.0	fail	F

Furthermore, norm-referenced grading is also used to assign grades as follows:

- I: top 10%
- II: next 25%
- III: next 30%
- VI: next 25%
- V: next 10%

(4) If the individual examiners have awarded different grades for the Master's thesis, the overall thesis grade shall be calculated as the arithmetic mean of the proposed grades. If necessary, the value of the arithmetic mean shall be rounded down to the next (intermediate) grade on the scale and expressed to one decimal place.

(5) The overall grade of the final assessment phase is determined by first calculating the arithmetic mean of the grades awarded for the programme modules, with the grades weighted in accordance with the number of credits associated with the respective modules, and then multiplying this weighted arithmetic mean by two. The grade awarded for the Master's thesis is then added to this value and the resulting sum divided by three and rounded to one decimal place. The final grade awarded to the candidate will appear in the examination certificate as follows:

1.0–1.2	excellent	A
1.3–1.5	very good	B
1.6–2.5	good	C
2.6–3.5	satisfactory	D
3.6–4.0	sufficient	E

(6) To ensure equal opportunities for all students, the special circumstances of students with disabilities must be taken into account when taking examinations or when having their coursework assessed. If a student's physical disabilities could affect their performance in an assessment or examination, the Examination Board may, on written request, agree to extend the time allocated to complete an assignment, grant respite periods that do not count towards the allotted assignment completion period, or provide other accommodations appropriate to a student's disability, e.g. provision of additional technical aids. In certain special cases, a student may be permitted to take an alternative form of assessment. Information regarding the nature of the impairment for which academic accommodation is sought shall be provided and shall be verified by a medical certificate issued by a physician that contains the relevant diagnostic findings. Applications for academic accommodation should be submitted no later than the candidate's registration for the final assessment phase. The Examination Board can delegate this duty, either generally or in specific individual cases, to the Chair of the Examination Board.

### **Section 13** **Master's thesis**

(1) The Master's thesis should demonstrate that the candidate is able to address a topic or project related to the field of evaluation within a limited period of time using the theoretical knowledge acquired during the Master's programme and applying appropriate scientific and research methodologies. Students are expected to provide a thorough analysis of the chosen topic and to present the results in an academically appropriate manner.

(2) The candidate shall be given the opportunity to make proposals for the topic to be addressed in the Master's thesis. The candidate shall submit the topic for the Master's thesis for confirmation by the Chair of the Examination Board in consultation with the two examiners.

(3) As a rule, the Master's thesis is completed in the fourth semester after the candidate has been admitted to the final assessment phase. The candidate shall receive written notification from the Examinations Office (Evaluation) confirming the topic of the Master's thesis and stating the date of confirmation and the submission date for the completed thesis. The date of this written confirmation shall be documented.

(4) The time allotted for completion of the master's thesis, from the date of confirmation to the date of submission, is three months. The topic, the assigned tasks and the scope of the Master's thesis shall be constrained such that the thesis can be completed within the allotted time. Further details pertaining to the Master's thesis are provided in the module catalogue.

(5) In exceptional cases and where reasonable grounds exist, a candidate can apply to the Examination Board for a maximum one-month extension to the thesis completion period. The extension application shall be submitted electronically to the Examinations Office (Evaluation) no later than one month before the end of the thesis completion period as defined above in Subsection (4), first sentence, and subsequently by post or in person. The date the application was submitted shall be documented. The Examination Board can delegate this duty, either generally or in specific individual cases, to the Chair of the Examination Board.

(6) If a candidate is prevented from working on their Master's thesis for a period of more than one week because of illness or some other cause beyond the candidate's control, the deadline for submission of the completed thesis shall be extended accordingly. The candidate shall notify the Examinations Office (Evaluation) immediately about the reasons for this interruption. In the event of an illness, the candidate shall provide a medical certificate issued by a physician (in English or German). If requested by the candidate, the Examination Board will take into account statutory periods of maternal leave, periods of parental leave and family care obligations. If a candidate is unable to work on their Master's thesis project for more than six weeks, the project will be aborted. Once the reasons for the interruption cease to apply, the candidate shall immediately apply for a new Master's thesis topic. The Examination Board can delegate this duty, either generally or in specific individual cases, to the Chair of the Examination Board (Evaluation).

The medical certificate shall include the following information:

The medical certificate shall describe the specific health impairment and shall specify the resulting disability and how this impacts the academic assessment or examination of the candidate. The precise designation of the illness or medical condition is useful but not essential. The decision regarding the candidate's ability to undergo academic assessment or take an examination shall be made by the Examination Board, not the physician. It is insufficient to merely state that the candidate is unable to participate in an academic assessment or examination without specifying the reasons. A doctor's note simply indicating the candidate's inability to work will not be accepted.

If a candidate requests from their physician a medical certificate that meets the requirements set out above, the physician will be unable to maintain patient confidentiality. The patient's request for a medical certificate that enables the Examination Board to determine whether the patient is able to participate in an academic assessment or examination is therefore a tacit demand to release the physician from their obligation of patient confidentiality. The burden of proof for demonstrating an incapacity to participate in an academic assessment or examination lies with the candidate; failure to furnish adequate proof may be detrimental to the candidate.

(7) A candidate is permitted to decline the topic of their Master's thesis on one occasion only and only within the first six weeks of the thesis completion period. If the thesis topic is declined within the stated deadline, the candidate shall apply for a new thesis topic no later than four weeks after declining the first topic. Once the second topic has been issued, the thesis completion period, as defined above in Subsection (4), first sentence, shall recommence.

(8) The Master's thesis project can be approved as a group project, provided that the contributions from the individual candidates can be clearly distinguished from one another through specification of the relevant section numbers, page numbers or other objective criterion, thus allowing the contributions to be separately assessed.

(9) Candidates submitting a Master's thesis shall include a declaration stating that the entire thesis or, in the case of a Master's thesis group project as defined in Subsection (8), the relevant designated part of the thesis, is their own original work and that no source materials or aids other than those indicated were used and that the thesis or any part thereof has not been submitted elsewhere for examination. The Examinations Office (Evaluation) and the examiners may check these claims, particularly through the use of plagiarism detection software. Any breach or violation may lead to the award of a fail grade for the thesis. The Master's thesis may be written in English or German.

(10) The Master's thesis shall be submitted to the Examinations Office (Evaluation) in the form of two printed copies and one electronic copy no later than the end of the thesis completion period. The electronic copy shall be submitted in a commonly used file format, such as Word or PDF, either on a file storage medium (preferably CD, DVD or a USB flash

drive) or by file transfer to a storage location specified by the Examinations Office (Evaluation). Postal submissions shall be deemed to have met the submission deadline, if the date of the postmark is no later than the last day of the thesis completion period. The date of thesis submission shall be documented. The submission deadline shall be deemed to have been met, if the electronic copy of the thesis is submitted within the thesis completion period.

(11) The Master's thesis shall be assessed by two examiners appointed with their consent by the Chair of the Examination Board; the first examiner should be the thesis adviser. One of the examiners should be from the group of professorial-level teaching staff. The time taken to assess the thesis should generally not exceed three months.

#### **Section 14** **Notification of results; Inspection of records**

(1) The results of coursework assessments or examinations (written exams, written reports, essays, Master's thesis, etc.) shall be communicated to the student immediately.

(2) The student shall, on request, be granted the opportunity to inspect the assessed work and the reasons for the grade awarded. Requests shall be submitted to the Examinations Office (Evaluation) within three months after receiving notification of the result. The date and time of the inspection appointment shall be determined by the Examinations Office (Evaluation).

#### **Section 15** **Repeating academic assessments and examinations**

(1) Any academic assessment or examination that was awarded a grade lower than 'sufficient' (4.0 / E) and was therefore a fail grade can be repeated twice. The Master's thesis can be repeated only once. If a student has failed an equivalent examination or academic assessment at another university or equivalent higher education institution, this shall be treated as a fail for the purposes of these regulations. Coursework assignment submissions and examinations that have been awarded a passing grade cannot be repeated.

(2) As a rule, repeat assessments or examinations should be conducted within a twelve-month period beginning six months after the previous failed assessment or examination. If a student fails the Master's thesis assessment, the application for a new Master's thesis project shall be submitted within six months after receiving notification of the failed assessment. A student that fails to meet the repeat assessment deadlines shall be deemed to have failed the repeat academic assessment or examination.

(3) In exceptional cases and where reasonable grounds exist, the Examination Board can consent to a third repeat assessment or examination to be held at the next possible assessment or examination date while taking due account of applicable time limits. Reasonable grounds are considered to exist particularly in cases where the student has successfully completed all other academic assessments and examinations during the Master's degree programme with the exception of the one assessment or examination for which they are applying for a third repeat attempt.

**Section 16**  
**Withdrawal from an examination; Failure to attend;**  
**Deception; Contravention of regulations**

(1) A candidate can withdraw from any academic assessment or examination up to one week prior to the assessment or examination without specifying their reasons provided that they have notified the Examination Office (Evaluation) about the proposed withdrawal either in person or in writing no later than one week before the examination or assessment date. If notification is provided in writing, the deadline will be deemed to have been met if the date of the postmark is no later than the last day of the notification period.

(2) A student shall be deemed to have failed an assessment or examination and shall be awarded a fail grade (5.0 / F) if they miss a scheduled assessment or examination date, or if they withdraw without good reason from the assessment or examination after it has begun, or if they fail to submit their Master's thesis within the specified thesis completion period.

(3) The reasons for withdrawing from or failing to complete an assessment or examination and the expected duration of the underlying circumstances shall be communicated immediately in writing to the Examinations Office (Evaluation) together with supporting documentation. If the reason for withdrawal or non-participation is an illness or medical condition, a medical certificate issued by a physician shall be provided that contains sufficient information on the extent and expected duration of the impairment to the candidate's health. If a child, who is primarily cared for by the candidate alone, becomes ill, the child's illness shall be treated as if the candidate was ill. If the reasons for withdrawing from or failing to complete an assessment or examination are accepted, the candidate can apply to continue the assessment or examination. Results already achieved will be retained.

(4) If a candidate attempts to influence the result of their assessment or examination by deception or by the use of unauthorized aids, the assessment or examination will be assigned a fail grade (5.0 / F). A candidate whose behaviour prevents the orderly conduct of an academic assessment or examination may, after receiving prior warning, be excluded from the assessment or examination, in which case the candidate will be awarded a fail grade (5.0 / F). In particularly serious cases, the Examination Board may decide to exclude the candidate from taking any further examination.

(5) The candidate shall be notified immediately in writing about any decisions made pursuant to Subsections (3) and (4) that are unfavourable to the candidate. The reasons for the decision and information on the candidate's right of appeal shall be included.

(6) The provisions in Subsections (1) to (5) shall also apply to the written examinations in the on-campus courses held during the first two semesters.

**Section 17**  
**Examination certificate; Formal graduation certificate; Diploma Supplement; Record retention period**

(1) A candidate who has successfully completed the final assessment phase shall receive an examination certificate within three months (date of postmark) that contains the grade awarded for the Master's thesis, the grades for the various coursework assessments and examinations during the blended learning Master's programme and the overall grade awarded for the final assessment phase. The examination certificate shall also specify the topic of the Master's thesis. It shall also list all modules and courses within the blended learning programme that the candidate has completed successfully. The graduate shall also receive a transcript of records, a formal graduation certificate and a diploma supplement.

(2) The date on the certificate shall be the date on which the last assessment or examination

was completed. The certificate will be signed by the Chair of the Examination Board and will bear the seal of the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University.

(3) In addition to receiving the examination certificate, the graduate will at the same time receive a formal graduation certificate conferring the academic degree 'Master of Arts (M.A.)' with the same date as the examination certificate and stating the overall grade attained. The formal graduation certificate will be signed by the Chair of the Examination Board and by the Dean of the Faculty of Human and Business Sciences at Saarland University and will bear the faculty seal.

(4) The examination certificate and the formal graduation certificate will be issued in English. If so requested by the graduate, the examination certificate and the formal graduation certificate can also be issued in German.

(5) Documents pertaining to academic assessments and examinations (e.g. written examinations, coursework assignment submissions, written reports and Master's theses, and any examiners' reports and records) shall be kept for at least five years after the date on which the last assessment or examination was completed (date of examination certificate).

## **Section 18 Academic misconduct**

(1) If a graduate is found to have cheated in an assessment or examination and if this fact only becomes apparent after the examination certificate has been conferred, the Examination Board may retroactively amend the grade awarded for the assessment or examination in which the graduate was found to have cheated and may assign a fail grade (5.0 / F) either for the entire assessment or examination, or for some part thereof.

(2) If the registration requirements for the final assessment phase were not met but there was no intentional misrepresentation on the part of the graduate and if this fact only becomes apparent after the examination certificate has been conferred, this defect shall be deemed to have been remedied by the fact that the graduate successfully completed the final assessment phase. If the graduate intentionally gained wrongful registration for the final assessment phase, the Examination Board shall decide on whether to revoke the results of the assessment in accordance with the relevant provisions in Section 48 of Administrative Procedure Act of Saarland (SVwVfG).

(3) The graduate shall be given an opportunity to make representations before any decision is made by the Examination Board.

(4) An incorrect examination certificate, an incorrect formal graduation certificate, an incorrect diploma supplement or any other incorrect certification shall be revoked and, if applicable, amended and reissued.

(5) Decisions pursuant to Subsection (1) and Subsection (2), second sentence, can only be made within a period of five years after the date on which the last assessment or examination was completed.

## **Section 19 Inspection of records; Appeal procedure**

(1) Once the examination process has been completed, the candidate may submit an application to inspect all records pertaining to the final assessment phase.

(2) Appeals against the examiners' decision shall be made pursuant to the provisions of

Section 68 of the Rules of the Administrative Courts (VwGO). The outcome of the appeal shall be decided upon by the Examination Board. In the case of objections raised about the grading of individual parts of the examination or assessment, the decision of the Board shall be based on representations to be obtained from those examiners who were responsible for awarding the grade.

### **Part 3 – Final provision**

#### **Section 20 Commencement**

These regulations shall come into force on the day after they are announced in the Official Bulletin of the Institutions of Higher Education in Saarland (*Dienstblatt der Hochschulen des Saarlandes*).

Saarbrücken, 28 June 2017

President of Saarland University  
(Univ.-Prof. Dr. Manfred Schmitt)